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FOR 1882.
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The Daily Press.

HONGKONG, OCTOBER 25TH, 1882.

Is missionary enterprise in China a failure? The question may be answered either in the affirmative or negative, according to the ideas entertained as to what constitutes success. What the missionaries would term the spiritual result of their work is, we should say, almost infinitesimal, but it cannot be denied that they exercise a considerable influence in educating the native mind and clearing away the trammels of ignorant superstition. There are some three hundred Protestant missionaries in China and a larger number of Roman Catholic priests. In the aggregate they represent a large amount of culture and intelligence, and individuals amongst them stand pre-eminent in mental vigour and the extent of their attainments. It is impossible that such a body of men could fail to make their influence felt, sparsely scattered though they be amongst such a teeming population as that of China. We once heard the remark made that if they only taught the natives to be a little cleaner their work would not be altogether in vain. But they do more than that. Many missionaries devote a considerable portion of their time to the promotion of secular education, and to them is mainly due the existence of the periodicals through which the Chinese are regularly made aware of the scientific and other movements in Western countries. It is in this direction that they achieve their success. They secure some adherents to the Christian religion, no doubt, but what is the value of the Christianity? It possesses, so far as we have been able to judge, neither stamina nor backbone. Foreigners in Hongkong and at the Treaty Ports find many Christian converts, a very general impression existing that they are less reliable than their heathen fellow-servants, and with regard to the Christians in their own

villages and towns, there is always a suspicion of interested motives. By embracing Christianity they acquire a friend in the missionary who will act as a buffer between them and their own authorities if they get into trouble, and they also take up the stand that as Christians they cannot conscientiously contribute funds towards the village feasts and festivals, to which if it were not for their Christianity they would be compelled to contribute by custom, and stronger arguments if necessary. They thus satisfy their conscience and save their money, a very pleasant coincidence in the case of any one, but especially so in that of the money loving Chinaman. Christianity in China, instead of being left to its own natural growth, is protected by express provisions in treaties with foreign nations. The result is that it is a plant of delicate and fragile constitution, with no more strength to resist a storm than an ostrich goes in a hot-house. The Roman Catholics estimate the number of the adherents of their church in China at 1,000,000, and the Protestants, according to Bishop Burdon, at from 40,000 to 60,000, "baptized and unbaptized." But there is no appearance of this million odd of Christians in China acting as any sort of leaven on the surrounding lump, or of their letting their light shine before men with any peculiar brilliance. A few days ago we published a letter from a Singapore correspondent of the Times on the subject of "Missionaries in India and China." The question, as it seems to us, was there treated with considerable fairness and with no inconsiderable amount of ability and discrimination, though there were portions of the letter to which we think the missionaries may justly take exception. The letter commenced as follows—"The interest of the Anti-Opium Society in the Chinese people is of illegitimate birth—the progeny of the disappointed zeal of the missionaries, rather than the spontaneous outcome of genuine philanthropy." This is a sentence certainly somewhat calculated to rankle in the minds of the missionaries, but it is true, except in so far as it may be taken to imply wilful deception on their part. Of this we do not believe them guilty, but they have persuaded themselves, with that facility with which men can persuade themselves to adopt a conclusion consistent with their interests, prejudices, or preconceptions, that the opium trade is really one of the great if not the principal obstacles to the spread of Christianity in China. As he proceeds, the Times correspondent gives the missionaries credit amongst other things, for having circulated among the reading millions of China "much wholesome literature, both secular and religious; and above all the Bible itself, pure and unadulterated, which is now a well-read and eagerly purchased book in China." He, however, disposes the mental calibre of missionaries as a rule and throws some little slur on their disinterestedness, saying that "Xavier and Bishop Pattersons appear at intervals to prove that the apostolic spirit is not extinct among men," but that it is rare that a man becomes a missionary if he can't do "as well" in a pecuniary point of view at home. It must be allowed that the lust of the good things of this world induces ministers of religion—in pretty much the same way as it does other people, and a man will generally find himself "called to another sphere of labour" (within the limits of honesty) when the call is accompanied by the promise of an increased stipend. The injunction to "go forth without scrip or purse" is not usually considered applicable to the present age. The missionaries are, nevertheless, an honest, hard-working, and intelligent body of men. But they are not Christianizing China, however much good they may be doing in other directions. As the Times correspondent says—"The excellence of the Hindu and Buddhist religions, which between them sway half the human race, forms a stumbling block in the way of the ordinary missionary, but is full of hope and promise to the enlightened few who realize the idea that God has made of one blood all the families of men." This corresponds with the remark of Deputy Surgeon-General Moore that "when Christianity enters pure Buddhism it meets an opponent somewhat worthy of its steel." The Times correspondent also says that "the really devout Indians who have, under the influence of Christian teaching, cast off Hindooism, have preferred to create a new and, as they say, pure religion for themselves rather than accept Christianity in the form in which it is presented to them by the missionaries." This reminds us of a remark of Sir CHARLES DALRY's which we had occasion to quote when writing on a similar subject some months ago. Referring to missionary enterprise pure Buddhism it meets an opponent somewhat worthy of its steel." 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EXTRACTS.

—AGE:

"Stepping Westward," did she say, at noon on that long Scotch day. "Stepping westward," yes, always, with staff and scabbard, wayfaring songs upon my lip, stepping, stepping, to the sound.

"Stepping westward—all that, Body and soul, by land or sea, Follow still the water-songs; That must end which has begun."

From "Poet's Harvest Home," by W. Ball Scott.

DAMASCUS AND THE DAMASCENES.

It would be strange if some anxiety did not prevail among the Christian community of Damascus at the present moment. We know, by the experiences of 1860, what they have to expect if only a spark of the religious fanaticism that has been lighted in Egypt should find its way to Syria. It was estimated that out of 32,000 Christians at Damascus at the time of the massacre, 2,500 grown-up men perished. Their bones were collected and placed in a tomb in the cemetery near the Bab Risan, where the Turks Santa Nicks used to show the window from which St. Paul was let down in a basket. A tablet is inscribed in Arabic: "This is what the people of Damascus have done unto us! O Lord, let justice be done to them!"—a petition that is probably answerable for the rude treatment the grave-stones have received. For years after the massacre it bore upon it the marks of Muslim bullets. At this time the entire Christian quarter on either side of the "street that is called Straight" was burned and plundered. The greater part of it has since been rebuilt, and the Protestant Presbyterian Mission, which was dispersed for a time after 1860, is more thriving than ever. Nevertheless, there is always more or less a sense of insecurity hanging over the Christian community. It was least intense, perhaps, during the governorship of Midhat Pasha; but the character of Hamdi Pasha, the present Governor-General, who is one of the Old Turkish party and a Court favourite, sent to Damascus simply to make his fortune, is not one to inspire confidence. At present there are about 20,000 Christians in Damascus out of a population of 150,000, or perhaps 180,000. They are of various denominations: Orthodox Greeks, Greek Catholics, Syrians, Syrian Catholics, Armenians, Armenian Catholics, Maronites, Latins, and Protestants. The two latter sects are weakest; but there are hardly 500 Maronites under the jurisdiction of a simple priest; the Maronite Patriarch, Peter, residing near Deir-el-Kafr, in the Lebanon. The Greeks of both cities number many as 12,000. The Patriarch of Antioch (the supreme head of the Greek Church in Syria) has his palace in the street which Damascus calls "Es-Sultany," and traders "Straight," close to the Greek Cathedral, an edifice lately built at the site of the one that was wrecked in 1860. Attached to it is a school subsidized by the Russian Government. It is not quite clear, considering the course events have lately taken in Algiers and the Barbary States, on which side the Algerian residents would range themselves; there are so many French in and about Damascus engaged in the silk industry. In 1860, it is true, Abd-el-Kader rendered enormous services to the Christian cause; but his son (who is now residing in the city) does not possess his father's influence over his compatriots; or perhaps even his inclination to serve the Christians. He was compromised himself indeed, on the Moslem side, at the time of the massacre. And Abd-el-Kader considered it necessary, when things quieted down, to shut himself up for a considerable period in the "Great Mosque" to purify himself from the taint he had contracted in the eyes of True Believers by having saved the lives of infidels.

The gateways of the khans are perhaps the most deserving of notice from an architectural point of view. As the centre of the city is approached the streets become narrow and tortuous, and locomotion often anything but easy. The merchants of Bigdah chiefly congregate in the beautiful Khan in the "Bazaar," or "Seed Bazaar," which bears the name of Assad Pasha. As we enter, the *eda* or call to prayer is chanted from the minaret hard by; and half a dozen portly merchants rise to their feet, with their open hands raised on each side of the face, and set to muttering the *takbir*, as the declaration "Allahu Akbar" ("God is most great") is called. In another moment they are on their knees all in a row, with their heads touching the carpet, reciting the prescribed prayers and praises of their first *eda*. The Damascus Moslems is considered much more devout than the Cairoites; but he rarely leaves a place of business to say any one of the five prayers in a mosque—say on a Friday. On that day the Khan is closed, and the city gates too, during the time of the *dala*, or noonday prayer. For this is when (according to an old tradition) Damascus will be surprised and plundered by the Ghours.

The Jews were formerly the bankers of the Pashas, and great merchants. They are at present upwards of 6,000 of them in Damascus, some of whom are still very wealthy. They have none of that down-trodden look which belongs to them in most Oriental countries. Their younger women possess considerable attractions of

face and figure, and have very much more the air of Jesus than Jules. They all shave their eyebrows, supplying their place with a circle of *kohl*, which is also used to blacken the edges of the eyelids both above and below the eye. In the streets they wear the white Arab cap, completely enveloping their persons; but are more conspicuous than the Muslimish in the matter of shoes and stockings. A Damascus Jew often carries the bulk of his husband's fortune on her neck or in her hair. His tenor of wealth is often "uncertain" that he makes a point of securing something out of a successful *oppo*. The houses of the richest Jews are counterparts of the great palaces of Damascus. A dark tortuous passage leads from the street into a magnificent quadrangle paved with marble. In the centre bubbles up a fountain, "built on" by means of pipes from the Barada. His winter apartments occupy one side of the quadrangle, the reception rooms—the *salman* and the *lezzeh*. The ceilings of the former are often richly panelled, and the walls covered with arabesques. The *lezzeh* is an sitting-room, in the hot weather.

The Jew's garden is anything but judiciously guarded; nor do his women conceal their features when at home or in the streets.

The Damascenes have but diversion. A luxuriant condition of inaction—the Arabic *bi*—is their idea of pleasure; and any diversion that should thoroughly wake them out of it would be regarded as a penance. On stated days of the week they meet in solemn session at one point or other on the river that custom has hollowed. On one side of the quay are the men smoking and coffee-drinking; on the other are the women dandling their wide-spring boots over the water and looking like sheeted ghosts in their white *tzara* and thick veils. The Turkish *fez-yel*; modified as it has lately

been, is rather becoming than otherwise, and the straiter Egyptian *biyut* shows the eyes at least; but the mandel of Damascus gives the *Glou* no chance. There are some charmers on the lauk, and sweet-scent-sellers, who do a brisk trade; and perhaps a grave tomfool. But this is no music to enliven the scene, and very little buzz of conversation proceeds from under the pink mandolins. The Barada (the ancient Abana) is the favourite lounge. But the "Aw" (the ancient Pharao) has its frequenters on the northern side; and in these suburbs which are at an inconvenient distance from both rivers, women will form a circle for hours round a pond on the road-side—such a fascination does the water-gill possess for them. The Arab theatre at Damascus owes its position very much to the patronage extended to it by Midhat Pasha who was Governor. The building is a plain room enough, furnished with leather-covered benches. Every one smokes; those in the backs rows smoke cigarette, for want of space; the grave, spectacled Effendies in the first row puffing at the luxuriant narghileh, their pipe-bows resting in front of them on the floor. The scenery, dresses, and appointments generally might have done duty on a village-green in England in fair-times; and there are no dances, or even fiddle players. It is simply the Arab taste for story-telling that brings the audience together night after night. Every one is decorously silent, for every one is equally interested in the tale that is told; and the remaining ear in his hand, the old man looks as though he were almost disappointed. He liked to detect people in falsehood and meanness, and he had evidently suspected that neither of the ornaments would be forthcoming. He shut himself with a vicious snap, and tottered off to the next with a fresh cigar for some great man's narghileh, that disturbs the general enjoyment.

The play is partly said, partly sung; but the melancholy whine in a minor key of the fiddle or banjo is unsupported by any accompanying. The orchestra, placed in a corner of the room, is only heard in the intervals between the acts. The darabukkah is a sort of drum, sometimes a foot and a half in length, very much smaller at one end than the other. The large end only is covered with a fish's skin. It is placed under the left arm, and suspended by a string that passes over the left shoulder. It is beaten by both hands. The *od* is the original of the late, and, with the article *el*, probably the same word. It is the favourite instrument with Arab peasants and tradesmen. The ramb is not unlike the zither; the frame is of walnut-wood and the cords of lamb's gut; it is played by means of small plectra of buffalo's horn attached to the forefingers of each hand. No women, whether Moslem or Christian, go to the play at Damascus. *St. James's Gazette.*

QUEEN'S STORIES.

MISS PROTHRO'S RAMBLES.

When old Sam Prothero, the millionaire, in a fit of uncustomed tenderness, gave his daughter the handsomest pair of diamond earrings that money could buy, he took the opportunity to caution her for the fifth time against holding communication with her brother John. Of late years, since his son had gone hopelessly to the bad, the old man had been a very harsh parent to his long-suffering daughter, partly owing to grief and disappointment, and partly because, as regards the womanly sympathy which she shared in his earning in his hand, for his daughter's crimson cheeks and averted eyes at once attracted his attention. He was chiefly possessed by a sentiment of her beauty.

"Ellan, you must call for that earring to-day."

"Yes, father," she said, speaking with an air of desperation.

The old man chuckled, and ate his breakfast with unusual zest. He more than suspected he was being deceived, but his daughter's disobedience and the loss of the diamonds were nothing to him as compared with the grim satisfaction of making her utterly wretched. When the poor girl started off on her errand, old Sam took a seat by the window, and watched eagerly for her return. No sooner did the carriage come in sight, than he hobbled as far as the door to meet her.

"Well?" he exclaimed, with a cunning look.

"Here it is, father," said the girl, bringing out a small packet from her muff.

Old Sam took the packet in silent amazement. Even now he did not believe that his daughter's earring had been recovered.

Old Sam chuckled as he thought of such an attempt.

But when he opened the packet, his astonishment was greater still, for there lay the earring, beyond all manner of doubt! Old Sam knew something about diamonds, and was consequently enabled to recognise at a glance that the stones in the earring were identical with those which he had given to his daughter. A careful scrutiny confirmed his suspicion.

Ellen Prothero: proudly looked her diamonds at him, and though she would willingly have sacrificed her diamond earrings for the same unbalanced purpose, she durst not run the risk of discovery by parting with such valuable ornaments. But her prudential reliance proved futile, owing indirectly, to her father's vulgar love of ostentation. He permitted her one evening to go to a ball in the charge of a chaperone on whose discretion he implicitly relied, and nothing would please him but that she must wear her new earrings.

"Don't you think, father, they would look too grand?" she urged, with a forboding that they would be safer in her room upstairs.

"Of course they would look grand," sympathised the old man; "that is why I want you to wear 'em. I didn't give 'em to you to hide away. I like people to see that I can afford 'em."

Ellen Prothero: however, assuming an injured and aggrieved tone, said—

"Much thanks I get for giving you a hand-some present. I shall take the earrings back again, and lock 'em up till you're old enough to take proper care of 'em. I don't believe your story about a stone being loose."

Old Sam seated himself in front of the bureau where he kept his will and other treasures, and fumbled at the lock with his gnawed old fingers. Having opened it with a hasty retreat, and shuffled off to the library. He was thoroughly out of temper, not only from disappointment having been deprived of a legitimate occasion for visiting his ill-humour, but because he had a strong suspicion that somehow or other, his daughter had stolen a march upon him. However, as he now had both the earrings in his possession, there must needs be an end of the matter.

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Old Sam did not realise that the earring was missing. The truth dawned upon him by slow degrees, and increased his irritation.

"Dear me, now I thought I put it here."

It is singular that I never can find anything when I want it," he muttered, as he groped about.

It was the fact that of late years the old man had acquired a singular knack of mislaying things. His memory was beginning to fail him, and many instances had occurred of this awkward infirmity. To put something carefully away, and to find it months afterwards in an unexpected nook or corner when he had completely forgotten all about it, had become quite a common occurrence with the old man, who, however, flat-torned himself that no oin but himself was aware of his weakness. The consequence was, that on the present occasion he did not trouble to make a prolonged search, feeling satisfied that the earring would turn up again unexpectedly some day or other. He contented himself with carefully putting away the one his daughter had just given him and looking up the bureau again, muttering as he rose from his chair—

"It is lucky I told Ellen I would take the earring away from her. If she wants to wear back she can't have 'em that's all—at least not till I come across the one I've mislaid."

The cunning old man was so pleased at being able to conceal from his daughter this conspicuous instance of senile weakness, that he almost forgot his recent disappointment, and returned to the room, in a better humour. His entrance interrupted a conversation between Miss Prothero and the butler, and had old Sam been quicker at hearing, he would have caught the closing remark of his daughter, which was as follows—

"You were quite right to speak to me about it, Newton. If it had been one of the maids, she would have had no business in your master's study last night, as you know, especially after every one else was in bed; but the truth is that it was I whom you caught sight of on the stairs. I—I—I had better, at a pretty true conception of what had happened, be preferred to attain my object by tortuous methods."

"Bring down the earring, Ellen," he said, abruptly, after dinner. "I want to have a look at 'em."

The old man eyes were fixed upon her, and the girl, hide her confusion, rose at once from her seat and hurried from the room.

"The alarm burst even sooner, than she expected. The old man seemed to have received a shock from the girl, and had

been, is rather becoming than otherwise, and the straiter Egyptian *biyut* shows the eyes at least; but the mandel of Damascus gives the *Glou* no chance. There are some charmers on the lauk, and sweet-scent-sellers, who do a brisk trade; and perhaps a grave tomfool. But this is no music to enliven the scene, and very little buzz of conversation proceeds from under the pink mandolins. The Barada (the ancient Abana) is the favourite lounge. But the "Aw" (the ancient Pharaoh) has its frequenters on the northern side; and in these suburbs which are at an inconvenient distance from both rivers, women will form a circle for hours round a pond on the road-side—such a fascination does the water-gill possess for them. The Arab theatre at Damascus owes its position very much to the patronage extended to it by Midhat Pasha who was Governor. The building is a plain room enough, furnished with leather-covered benches. Every one smokes; those in the backs rows smoke cigarette, for want of space; the grave, spectacled Effendies in the first row puffing at the luxuriant narghileh, their pipe-bows resting in front of them on the floor. The scenery, dresses, and appointments generally might have done duty on a village-green in England in fair-times; and there are no dances, or even fiddle players. It is simply the Arab taste for story-telling that brings the audience together night after night. Every one is equally interested in the tale that is told; and the remaining ear in his hand, the old man looks as though he were almost disappointed. He liked to detect people in falsehood and meanness, and he had evidently suspected that neither of the ornaments would be forthcoming. He shut himself with a vicious snap, and tottered off to the next with a fresh cigar for some great man's narghileh, that disturbs the general enjoyment.

"Mended; oh! What has gone wrong?"

"I had to take one of the earrings to be mended to-day."

"Poor girl! It was lie, of course, and it made her float creeps as she uttered it. But sudden fear and perplexity caused her to resort to subterfuge."

"Mended; oh! What has gone wrong?"

"One of the stones is loose."

"Ah! Then the other earring is no good to you till you get the pair?" said old Sam, whose expression plainly showed that he did not believe a word of the story. "I'll take care of it for you."

When the girl placed the case containing the remaining earring in his hand, the old man looked as though he were almost disappointed. He liked to detect people in falsehood and meanness, and he had evidently suspected that neither of the ornaments would be forthcoming. He shut himself with a vicious snap, and tottered off to the next with a fresh cigar for some great man's narghileh, that disturbs the general enjoyment.

"When will the other one be home, oh?

"Ellen named a well-known jeweller, from whom the earrings had been purchased, and despatched a week as the time required for repairing the defect. The next moment he was sitting in the library, and the old man said that brings the case containing the remaining earring in his hand, the old man looked as though he were almost disappointed. He liked to detect people in falsehood and meanness, and he had evidently suspected that neither of the ornaments would be forthcoming. He shut himself with a vicious snap, and tottered off to the next with a fresh cigar for some great man's narghileh, that disturbs the general enjoyment.

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